

1st INTERNATIONAL
DRAG KING EXTRAVAGANZA:
A CONFERENCE AND
SHOWCASE EXPLORING F2M
GENDER TRANSFORMATION

FAST FRIDAY PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

THE 2ND INTERNATIONAL
DRAG KING EXTRAVAGANZA

SHOWCASE

Saturday, October 21, 2000

@



Making History:

144 N. Wall St. 614.464.2880

www.members.tripod.com/~fastfriday/

Sponsored by

OUT



Documenting and Preserving
Drag King Culture

The Ohio State University

October 15-17, 1999

(614) 262-3125 or (614) 263-6616

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donnatroka@hotmail.com

BACKSTAGE PASSES



1st International Drag
King Extravaganza
Dragdom
Friday, Oct. 15, 1999
Woody's Pub
8-2

1st DRG

4TH INTERNATIONAL DRAG KING EXTRAVAGANZA

1DKE.4

Saturday, October 19, 2002

SHOWCASE

Special Guest DJ Tina V

OUT

8 PM TO 2 AM

On Our Backs

Hey, y'all, This here zine is a lil'piece of diy archives propaganda to accompany the "Making History" workshop at IDKE 8. Sorry I couldn't be there with you, but you are in the good hands of my fellow drag-king-history enthusiasts / workshop facilitators. (And if you missed the workshop, well then, you are in the good hands of this zine.)

We are hoping that these tips and insights might prove useful as you consider how you might make your living drag king history available to future generations -- by creating, preserving, and sharing primary sources of recorded history.

In one of our online planning sessions/chats, I suggested that we can summarize our propropaganda efforts by challenging you to consider the following:

- 1) *Your history is important...*
- 2) *What parts of your history do want remembered?*
- 3) *How are you going to document and preserve that?*

(I think #2 can be the hardest to answer.)

BTW, I am the librarian at the Newcomb College Center for Research on Women (nccrow.tulane.edu) and many thanks go to NCCROW for paying for the printing of this zine and for supporting the New Orleans Drag King Collection Project.

I can be reached at diyarchives@yahoo.com.

Enough about me, let's meet your workshop facilitators...

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International Drag King Community Extravaganza
(IDKE 8 / Austin, TX / October 18th-22nd)

My interest in archiving the history of IDKE stems from my involvement in the birth of the event. IDKE grew out of a commitment to principles of community and collaboration and as the event approaches a decade of existence, I believe it is important to celebrate our history. As a marginal community, we can not rely on mainstream historians for collecting and telling our stories. We must do that work ourselves so that all those in the IDKE family will have an understanding of the origins, principles and vision of the First International Drag King Extravaganza.

-- Julie Applegate, AKA Jake Wakeman
(vespadyke@yahoo.com)

I've been studying archives and archiving practices for the past few years, for my dissertation. I'm excited when I can combine that knowledge with other things I love: drag/gender performance, crafting, and creative strategies for documenting individual and collective experiences.

--Alana Kumbier/Redrider
(dragarchivist@yahoo.com)

I think I've had as much fun keeping my troupe's archive as I have performing as a drag star. It's powerful to look back at all the stuff we've collected, and to realize how much DK PDX (my troupe) has done over the years.

--Christa Orth/Simon LeBongo
(christamae@yahoo.com)

#1 YOUR HISTORY IS IMPORTANT



However, movements that fail to preserve the records of their activities remain invisible to history. Historians use readily available original record to recreate "what is was like."

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archivists, will always reflect power relationships. Archives, we wrote, "are not passive storehouses of old stuff, but active sites where social power is negotiated, contested, confirmed." By extension, memory is not something found or collected in archives, but something that is made, and continually re-made.²

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"...encourage people to document their own local histories, to construct a real, rather than distorted memory, and a sense of identity and belonging – a sense of self and of society which is not blinded by attempts to ape the US... It is based on a firm belief that if you lose your memory you lose your social vision."

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Without
records, we can never be certain of our history.
Without records, we must take someone else's
word for our past.

1

1 PRESERVING YOUR ORGANIZATION'S RECORDS.
North Dakota State Historical Records Advisory Board

5 "Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance." Terry Cook; Joan M. Schwartz. *Archival Science*; 2002; 2, 3; pg. 171 – p.2

21 "Documenting Local Knowledge" www.reflect-action.org

23 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Religious Archives Network
GUIDE TO PRESERVING HISTORICAL RECORDS

When considering DIY Archival Projects,
find inspiration in...

The Lesbian Herstory Archives

"THE LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVES OF NEW YORK CITY, THE LARGEST AND OLDEST LESBIAN ARCHIVE IN THE WORLD, BEGAN IN 1973 AS AN OUTGROWTH OF A LESBIAN CONSCIOUSNESS-RAISING GROUP AT THE GAY ACADEMIC UNION. THE FOUNDERS WERE CONCERNED ABOUT THE FAILURE OF MAINSTREAM PUBLISHERS, LIBRARIES, ARCHIVES, AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS TO VALUE LESBIAN CULTURE. IT BECAME OBVIOUS THAT THE ONLY WAY TO INSURE THE PRESERVATION OF LESBIAN CULTURE AND HISTORY WAS TO ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT ARCHIVES GOVERNED BY LESBIANS".

not to refuse any donation of materials that a lesbian considers important in her life and actively to encourage ordinary lesbians to collect and donate the archival evidence of their everyday lives.

"THE LESBIAN HERSTORY ARCHIVES EXIST TO GATHER AND PRESERVE RECORDS OF LESBIAN LIVES AND ACTIVITIES SO THAT FUTURE GENERATIONS WILL HAVE READY ACCESS TO MATERIALS RELEVANT TO THEIR LIVES. THE PROCESS OF GATHERING THIS MATERIAL WILL ALSO SERVE TO UNCOVER AND COLLECT OUR HERSTORY DENIED TO US PREVIOUSLY BY PATRIARCHAL HISTORIANS IN THE INTERESTS OF THE CULTURE WHICH THEY SERVE. THE EXISTENCE OF THESE ARCHIVES WILL ENABLE US TO ANALYZE AND REEVALUATE THE LESBIAN EXPERIENCE; WE ALSO ANTICIPATE THAT THE EXISTENCE OF THESE ARCHIVES WILL ENCOURAGE LESBIANS TO RECORD THEIR EXPERIENCES IN ORDER TO FORMULATE OUR LIVING HERSTORY."

<http://www.lesbianherstoryarchives.org/>

Since I couldn't be at the workshop myself,

I wanted to take the opportunity to create

A LIL' ROUNDTABLE Q&A MOMENT HERE...

So I have asked each of the facilitators a question, and then Christa asked me one in return.

CH: I know you are interested in the ideas of identity and community as they relate to archival collections. Do you see documenting and preserving drag king history as a form of community-building?

Alana: I think that documenting and preserving drag king history can be a way of representing a community (e.g., a troupe; a group of people who put on & attend shows and events together; a local queer culture). The tricky part of the process is recognizing how much of the documentation and preservation reflects an entity that's already there, and how much the process creates a community (or a sense of community) for the purpose of an archiving project. That said, we can also think of documenting and preserving drag king history as community-building activities when we imagine those activities as things we -- drag kings, fans, queer historians, professional & diy archivists -- do together, with a shared purpose.



CH: You will be donating the records of DK PDX to the Gay and Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest at the Oregon Historical Society. How would you like to see the records of your troupe being used in the future?

Christa: I would hope that historical DK PDX materials would be used to study revolutionary gender and sexuality shifts, queer performance, and anti-corporate culture. And all of that with a lot of glamour and glitter throughout.

Christa: What do you think is uniquely regional about the drag king experience in New Orleans? What about your archives might reflect that?

CH: That is a tough question, especially since I haven't experienced any other drag king scenes except for the small, but delicious taste that I got at IDKE 6 in Chicago. Major influences on the city's king scene and the various troupes that have performed in town include: very few lesbian bars and a strong drag queen scene. The oral histories that we have collected repeatedly lament the lack of lesbian spaces, collaborating/competing with queens, and the need to be more conservative or "dumb down" performances to appeal to a more general off-the-street audience.

Although not captured in the archives -yet! - I will say that the general "laissez les bon temps roulez" attitude of this fine city, aka "the City that Care Forgot," affects both the performances, the audience, and the vibe at the shows. The city's enthusiasm has allowed the Carnival Kings to have weekly Tuesday night shows at midnight for 3 years now (with only a 2 months off due to Katrina!)



CH: You are helping to select an archival repository for the IDKE records, which can be a difficult decision. In your opinion, what are the top three factors to consider when selecting an archival repository?

Julie: My top concern is accessibility. I am not an archivist by training, rather I am one of the founders of the event and as such am interested in preserving the history of the event and making it available to as many interested people as possible. I am also aware that there are sometimes different 'versions' of the history of an event and would like to see us choose an archival format that will allow for many different people to contribute to what becomes the 'story of IDKE.' As long as the event is evolving, I would like to see an archival format that can accommodate deposits from as many different contributors as is manageable.

✂ Scrapbooking ✂ ✂ ✂ ✂

Scrapbooking can be a short- or long-term creative practice. You might consider putting together a scrapbook of materials to represent your history as a drag/gender performer, to document your troupe, or to collect and display material from a specific event. Scrapbooking can be something you do alone, or as part of a collective. We tend to think of scrapbooks as documenting one person's experience, but really, the form is great for collaboration because you can add individual pages, collect pages from troupe members, and give people room to be creative within specific guidelines (determined, e.g., by the size of the paper, the theme of the book, or the kind of material to include).

You may feel intimidated or overwhelmed when confronted with the "Scrapbooking" section of your local craft store; there's an entire craft industry that encourages us to think that scrapbooking involves buying lots of special paper, stickers, ribbons, and mass-produced ephemera in order to create pretty pages. If you're looking for an excuse to indulge in experimentation with these materials, then creating a scrapbook can be a great reason to start. It's important to remember, however, that scrapbooks have a long history (people were making them long before the advent of the big box craft store!) - and that you don't need to have lots of money for supplies

or access to special computer programs to create a book.

Scrapbooks are great because they allow you to create a context for the photos, documents, ephemera, and clippings you include on each page. Scrapbooking gives you a chance to craft a representation of an event or an experience and to organize your materials, souvenirs, and images at the same time. For example: you might develop a page around a show, and include photos documenting acts, a copy of the show flier or other promo materials, a setlist, and your own notes about the night. When you put your stuff together in the context of a scrapbook page, you can include material that might not fit in a photo album, or might get lost if it's not glued into the pages of a book.

Scrapbook projects provide excellent opportunities to sort through your files and boxes, determine what matters most to you, and then make it part of a creative work. Even if you don't feel like being creative or doing a lot of embellishment, scrapbooking can be a way of organizing those materials for yourself - remember that a scrapbook is, basically, a book with stuff pasted into it!

Ideas, Inspiration, History:

The Scrapbook in American Life. Edited by Susan Tucker, Katherine Ott, and Patricia Buckler. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006.

Keeping a Journal

By keeping a journal, you can create a written record of your thoughts, memories, and impressions. Many of us associate keeping a journal with a dedicated writing practice - we may think that journaling involves writing often, and writing a lot. It's great if you can engage in that sort of writing practice, but it isn't the only way to "keep a journal." Journals can serve a variety of purposes, all of them valuable for documenting your experience.

You could keep a journal to...

- ★ Record notes on acts as you're working on them
- ★ Capture your thoughts immediately after a show - so that you have some "raw notes" to work with later, or to jog your memory
- ★ Draft material for other writing or artistic projects
- ★ Sketch costume, prop, and set design ideas
- ★ Have a place to write down ideas for future acts (a pocket-sized notebook is great for this kind of on-the-go recording)

As with scrapbooks, journals don't need to be fancy or expensive - if the journal seems too nice to write in, or carry around, or experiment with, you probably won't use it. Try to find a journal that feels comfortable for writing, drawing, and note-taking.

Recommended reading/viewing:

Drawing from Life: The Journal as Art. By Jennifer New. Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 2006.

A.K./Redrider

On Paper or Online?

As you're thinking about keeping a journal, you can also consider where you want to do your journaling. In addition to keeping a paper journal, you can establish an online journal (a weblog or blog) where you can write for yourself and an audience. Sites like blogger.com, livejournal.com, and vox.com offer free accounts and easy-to-set-up blogs to users. On livejournal.com and vox.com, you can limit your readership through privacy settings. Establishing these settings gives you greater control over who reads your entries, and who can comment on them.

If you decide to set up an online journal or blog, you can use your journal to:

- ★ Network and start conversations with other dragsters
- ★ Share your musings with an audience (immediately after you write them!)
- ★ Integrate video clips in your written entries
- ★ Cross-post your entries to drag-related blogging communities (like the IDKE Archives community!:
<http://community.livejournal.com/idkearchives/>)

If you decide to keep a blog for archiving purposes, consider:

- ★ Backing up your entries (so that you have a copy of what you've written)
- ★ Adding tags to your entries. Tags are keywords that help you (and your readers) to locate all of the entries you've classified under a given topic - like "drag" or "performing" or "history"

Hey you folks in troupes, these pages are for you...



Taking Minutes



"A minute is a record of what the meeting discussed and decided about a particular topic."

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7. Voluntary Action Leicester. TAKING MINUTES

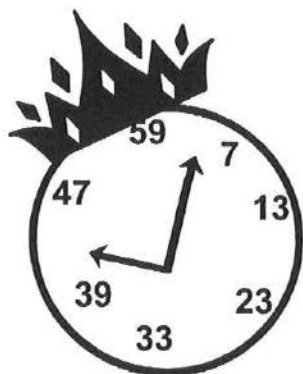
Ideally

impartial and factual, minutes are agreed upon by all members present as an accurate record of the meeting.

The minute taker should send out minutes as soon as possible after a meeting and request corrections/additions/approval.

Minutes are used to find out:

- ▶ What was decided
- ▶ Why it was decided
- ▶ What else was reported or discussed
- ▶ What action the reader is supposed to take and when
- ▶ What action others are supposed to take and when



what to include:

***Name of the organization, *Description of the meeting (who met where when and why), ** FULL DATE WITH YEAR, *Folks present?, *Who's facilitating/moderating/chairing?, *Who's taking the minutes?, *Were the last set of minutes approved? Any last-minute corrections? *** A separate minute for each item or topic covered at this meeting ...including any plans for the next meeting.**

WHAT TO KEEP:



Personal papers

- *Letters, *Diaries, *Personal writings and sketches,
- *E-mails, *Flyers, momentos, notes
- *Records of presence, participation, activism, service, life
- *Scrapbooks *Crafts *Clipped Articles *Blogs

Organizational Records

... all of the above and.....

- *Constitutions and by-laws *Flyers * ANY AND ALL PUBLICATIONS
- *Minutes of meetings *Committee files *Membership lists
- *Scrapbooks *Logs *Reports
- *Web sites *Correspondence *Publicity files
- *Newsletters, articles, etc of interest to organization

"dating all items and identifying photographs and audio-visuals materials as to who, what, where, and when."

WHAT NOT TO KEEP:

- *Rough drafts of any documents
- *Financial information that is summarized on annual/monthly reports
- *JUNK MAIL
- *Multiple copies of routine paperwork
- *Receipts
- *Cancelled checks

Papers and records should be archived after they are no longer in regular use.

Many files are necessary for administrative, legal, fiscal, and public relations purposes and should be stored carefully while they are in active use.

However, when purging files to remove items no longer in use, some will be historically important while others can be safely discarded.

WHAT TO CREATE?

? ? ?
?
? ? ?

Archiving Tips for Long-Term Storage: *23*

"Areas that are more ideal are those in which people live and work, not hot attics, potentially wet basements, or uninsulated garages."



**Avoid over
exposure to UV
rays ...darkness
preferred**

**Remove Paper Clips ,
Rubber Bands
Unfold paper**



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**Think
ACID-FREE!!**

--ink
--paper
--folders
--tape
--Glue
--plastic pockets

"There are, of course, a number of other contributors to collections deterioration, which can be labeled "external agents of deterioration." They include: physical handling, theft, vandalism, fire, water, pests, pollutants, light, and uncontrolled temperature and relative humidity (RH)."

"A frequent recommendation is a stable temperature no higher than 70°F and a stable relative humidity between a minimum of 30% and a maximum of 50%"

internal or inherent vice:
weakness in the chemical
or physical makeup of
an object introduced
during its manufacture.






**"Heat
accelerates
deterioration:
the rate of
most chemical
reactions,
including
deterioration,
is
approximately
doubled with
each increase
in temperature
of 18°F (10°C)"**

For example, papers composed of wood pulp may turn yellow and brittle in just a short period of time. Some adhesives will dry out and fail, while others may discolor and turn into a sticky mass. Old writing inks may seem to burn through a paper sheet, or, they may have faded and become illegible. Audio tapes become sticky and unplayable. Photographic prints can fade or become yellowed and brittle; and photographic films can emit an odor, or be wavy or spotted. These problems are due in part to internal vice, and they affect all types of collections--those in private homes to those in large institutions. For example, did you know that roughly 33% of all research collections in academic libraries are embrittled to some degree and that many items are damaged beyond the point of safe use?

Embrace Long-term Commitment

*Include documentation and preservation of
your troupe's identity, culture and activities
in the mission statement or constitution:*

Create a new position in the troupe:

 Archivist Ethnographer
Oral Historian  Historian 
 Documentarian 



*Is someone giving your group photos,
videos or writings?*



Consider asking for a release form

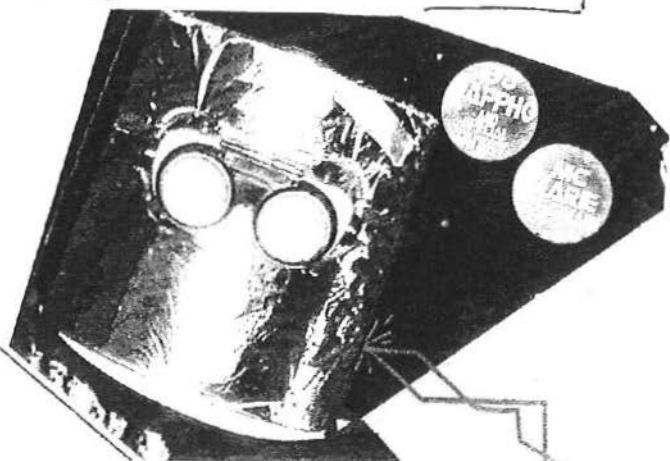
INCLUDE THESE BASICS

- *the date
- *the name of the creator
- *the name of the recipient
- *list of items given
- *transfer of ownership
- *details of right to use and publish



Your mission

if you choose to accept it, is to interview drag stars of your choice to get their take on what it is like to be a glamorous gender performer in the world today.



**DRAG STARS!
NIGHT**

It's important

to document our amazing and spectacular drag movement because we have something to say about our queer experience, and therefore about how our history is told.

Along with pictures, articles, flyers, videos, etc. personal stories tell more about thoughts, feelings, and other real things that archives cannot capture through documents.

Oral histories are the best way to diversify texts about queer, gender, and drag history, and make sure everyone's voice is heard.

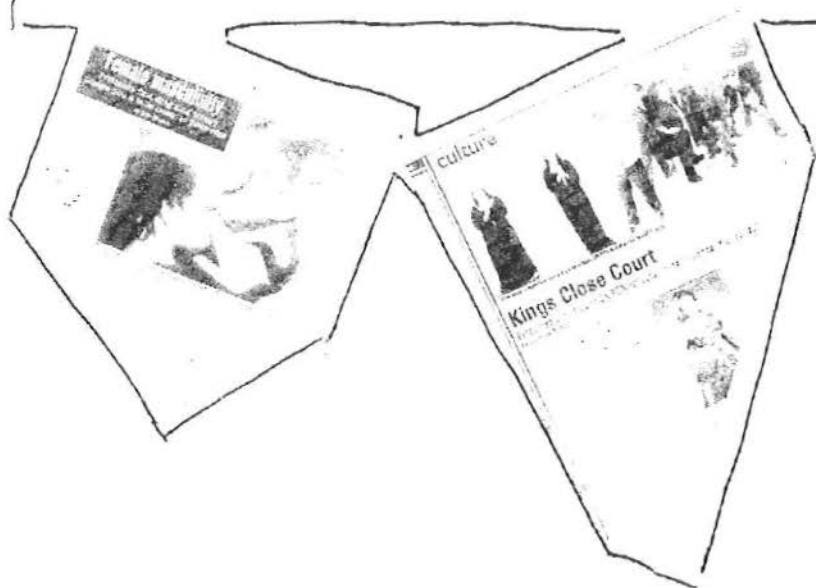
How to get started

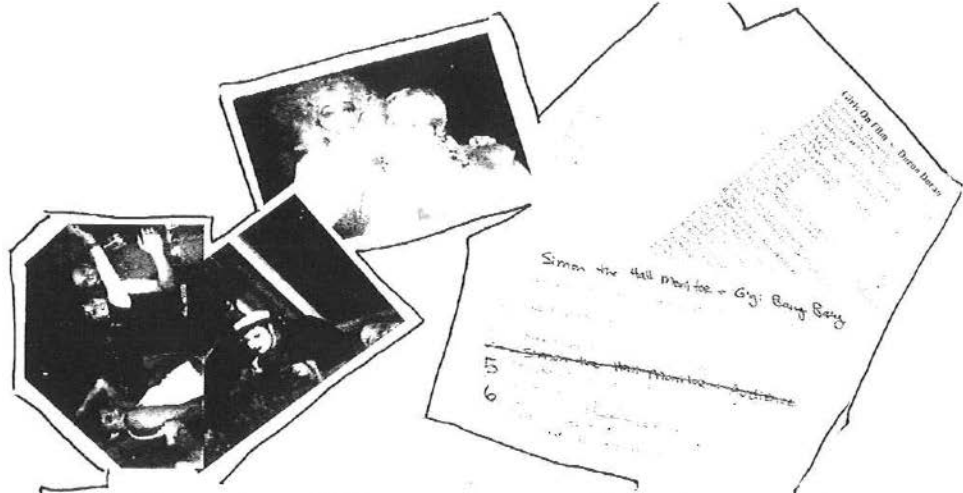
Choose your drag star(s). Start with one, then work through the whole troupe! For added history, interview elder drag stars in your town.

Get recording equipment. Digital voice recorders are the best devices, but cassette recorders will do. Digital formats are easier to preserve nowadays. Always use a microphone, and speak directly into it.

Interview etiquette. Meet in a quiet location, free of distractions. Instead of reading your questions, have a conversation. Ask your questions and then listen!

Get permission. Be up front that you are collecting this interview to preserve drag history and will be donating the recording to a public archive. Ask them to sign a permission form to ensure they understand.





Questions to ask (some suggestions)

Get basic information. State your name (and drag name), the date, and the place of the interview. Ask the interviewee their name (don't forget drag name!), place and date of birth.

Tell me about your first drag experience...

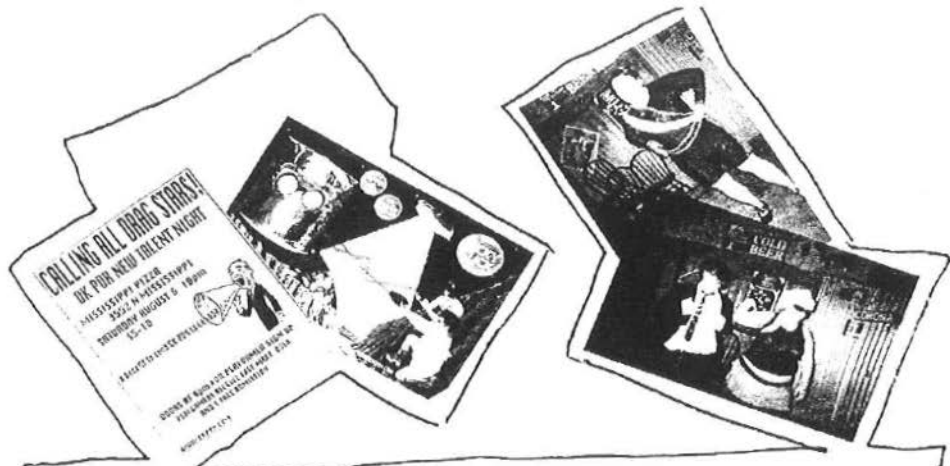
Tell me about your first IDKE...

Tell me about your drag troupe/drag scene in your city...

How has drag influenced your life?

How has your life experience influenced your performance?

How has your experience with drag changed over time?



How has IDKE changed over time?

What is the future of drag/gender performance?

What is drag's contribution to queer culture?

The future of your history

Now that you and your fellow drag stars have made history, take steps to preserve your interviews for future queers to be inspired by.

- Add oral histories to your spectacular drag archive.
- Add your interviews to the IDKE Archive. Send your recordings to me, Christa Orth, queer historian. I'll add them to the IDKE's collection and possibly include them in the history exhibit at IDKE 10 Columbus.

Contact me or send interviews to
christamae@yahoo.com



IDKE ARCHIVES

HELP US TO CAPTURE ALL THAT IS THE HISTORY OF IDKE
THE PERFORMANCES AND THE PERFORMERS,
THE MEMORIES AND THE MELODRAMA,
THE INSIGHTS AND THE INSPIRATIONS...

JOIN

idkearchives.livejournal.com

and/or

idkearchives.blogspot.com

AND POST YOUR STORY, PHOTO, ETC,

*Help us build the IDKE entry on Wikipedia,
add details about troupes, performers,
venues, etc.*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idke>

*(If you have questions about how to add to the wiki,
feel free to email me for help at diyarchives@yahoo.com)*

??? OTHER COLLECTIONS ???

We now know that there is

* the New Orleans Drag King Collection Project
(<http://nccrow.tulane.edu/collections/kings/>)

* the Drag King Timeline (<http://www.andersontoone.com>)

* the DK PDX archives, which are going to the Pacific Northwest at the
Oregon Historical Society

We would like to compile all the other efforts to collect and document the
history of drag kings through primary source materials, both online and in
archival repositories. If you have or know of a project, please send info to me,
Cristina, at diyarchives@yahoo.com.